1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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called Gommu Koi, or Koi of the river bank, *gomma* being a Telugu word for horn or tusk, used in the Upper Godavari district to mean the banks of the Godavari. He says that the Gutta Koi also generally refer to the lowlanders as '*mayalotilu* or rogues' and say that long ago their ancestors lived with them on the Bastar plateau, but went once to visit a zamindar in the plains, and so liked his country that they settled there and persuaded many others to follow them, and thereafter often harried the plateau in secret marauding expeditions. He refers to the lowlanders as calling themselves Doralu, from the Telugu honorific *Dora* or 'lord', and being called by the Telugus Koi Doralu. The specimens he gives of their language show it to be a Gond dialect very greatly corrupted by Telugu influences, not only the vocabulary but even verb and noun inflexions being Teluguized.

In the *Godavari District Gazetteer* the article on Koyas clearly deals with the lowlanders only, and speaks of the self-importance with which they know that their title *Dora* means 'lord' and insist on being given it, tolerating the alternative '*Mama*' (maternal uncle) from other castes, but disliking being called Koyas.

The designation Gottor is now common among the Telugus and Telugu Koyas of south Bastar for the Marias of the plateaux and the 'Koyas' at the foot of the plateau in Konta tahsil and Sukma zamindari. No one need worry about it as indicating any special race; it is simply a Telugu term for Hill Koitor. Glasfurd, though he wrongly spoke of the Gottor as a separate division, yet righted matters by pointing out that there was no real difference between them and the Marias of Dantewara. Naturally, Bison-horn Marias living on both sides of the southern edges of the plateau would be more influenced by the Telugus than those in the centre and north of the plateaux.

But there remains a real distinction between the Bison-horn Marias, even those who live along the southern fringes of their country, below the passes, and the Koyas of the plains. The latter are known as Doria, but this is obviously a corruption of Dor Koitor, their lands being to the Bison-horn Marias of the Dantewara and Jagdalpur plateaux, Dorbhum or lowlands. Your Telugu or Englishman writing in Telugu surroundings may say that the social status of the lowland Koya is greater than that of the Hill Koya; but your hill man will always look down with a healthy contempt on the plains man. Cain indeed realized this, but perhaps hardly understood the foulness of the abusive Chhattisgarhi term *mailotia* which he gives with a capital initial letter as the Hill Koya's name for the lowland Koya. The latter knew he was despised by the highlander, and with the self-assertiveness that is the typical fruit

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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of the inferiority complex palmed off his name Dor Koi or Lowland Koi on the ignorant Telugu as Dora Koi, and has proceeded to object to the name Koi and demand always the name Dora or Dorla, simultaneously impressing on the Telugu how superior he is to the Highlander.

I have verified these points by personal investigation supplemented by reliable information from assistants directed to make enquiries on specified lines. When the traveller descends the Aranpur pass, he finds the villagers at the foot of the pass in such villages as Gumadasaka, Bikrampalli, Kondasaoli, Kamargudem, Kodmair, Karrigudem, Bayampalli, Kundair, Ursangal, Durandarbha, Michiguda, Vadri, Silger, Mandimarka, Singaram, Tarlaguda Banjepalli and Durma inhabited by people indistinguishable from the Bison-horn Marias above the pass, or by Maria Lohars. The only difference is a noticeable Telugu influence on their Maria dialect. At Jaggergonda, six or seven miles beyond the foot of the pass, he meets the first Telugu-speaking non-Koitor village, and just beyond this comes to the first Dorla villages, Rajpenta, Achkat and Kamaram. Southwards in the country covered by the new Ordnance Survey one-inch maps, on sheet 65 F/3, Singaram in square B1, Puvarti, Junaguda and Rayagudem in A2, Chimili; Surpanguda, Kistaram and Morpalli in B2, all the villages in A3, and Tadmetla, the only village in B3, are Dorla villages. Generally speaking, all the riverain tracts of Bhopalpatnam zamindari, Bijapur tahsil, Kotapalli-Pamer zamindari and southern Konta tahsil are Dorla villages, though here and there will be found Gottor Koya, i.e. Bison-horn Maria villages in Konta Dorla country such as Tokanpalli, Burkapalli and Chintaguppa (in map 65 F/3, square C3).

These Dorla at census refused to call themselves Koya, and were not returned as such but as Gonds; and they are the principal element in the 19,426 professing tribal religion out of the 24,407 Bastaris returned as Gonds in the 1931 census. The 4,981 Hindu Gonds returned are mostly Dorlas from the Lingagiri *pargana* of Bhopalpatnam and the adjacent parts of Bijapur, who have become Lingayats, wearing a *rudraksha* bead in a silver box or a Shiva *lingam* slung on a thread.

It will be clear, therefore, that the 9,988 persons returned at the census as Koyas are not the Dorla or lowland Koyas returned as Koyas in the East Godavari Agency. They are the Bison-horn Marias living at the foot of the passes in Konta and Sukma and slightly influenced by Telugu contacts. Of the Koya dialect of Gondi returned in 1931 as spoken by 6,172 persons in Bastar, however, it is probable that it represents the speech of the Dorla

4: Fürer-Haimendorf E-5 (1942-1945) 1948
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101 without a considerable Gond population, but the main strongholds of
162 the Gonds are to-day the Satpura plateau including the districts of Betul,
197 Chhindwara and Seoni, where the western type of Gondi is spoken, Mandla and Chhattisgarh in the east, where the Gonds have adopted the local dialect of eastern Hindi but retained their tribal identity, and in the south Chanda and the neighbouring Yeotmal, where the language is Gondi, but of a dialect somewhat different from the Gondi of Betul.

101 To the north-west the Gonds extend across the Narbada River into
191 Central India, and are particularly numerous in Indore State; to the
197 east of the Central Provinces lie the states of Gond princes, such as
[619] Kawardha, Sakti, Raigarh and Sarangarh, to-day known as the Chhattisgarh States. Although neither these Gond rajas, nor indeed the Gonds among their subjects speak Gondi, they are fully conscious of their tribal associations and the high status of the ruling princes adds no doubt to tribal prestige in the whole of Chhattisgarh.

Further south, bordering on Chanda, Drug and Raipur, extend the two States of Kanker and Bastar, where Gonds constitute the majority of the population. Bastar in particular is the home of three important groups of Gonds: the Murias, the Hill Marias and the Bisonhorn Marias, all of which differ in language and custom very considerably from the Gonds of the Central Provinces.[1] Their colourful and complex cul-
[179] tures are representative of ancient aboriginal India and show obvious affinities with the Austroasiatic cultures of Orissa and Chota Nagpur. Bastar has also part in the Koyas or Dorlas of the Godavari area, the most southern branch of the Gond family occurring in considerable strength in Madras Presidency and Hyderabad State and stretching across the barrier of the Eastern Ghats into the vicinity of Rajahmundry. Most Koyas still speak a dialect of Gondi, but those surrounded by Telugu populations, have changed over to Telugu.

Another substantial group of Gonds, closely akin to the Gonds of Yeotmal and Chanda, is found in the hilly country between the Godavari and the Penganga Rivers constituting the Adilabad District of H.E.H. the Nizam's Dominions, and it is these Gonds who form the subject of the present work.

101 All the Gonds of Adilabad, except for an insignificant overflow of
● 186 Dhurwe Gonds from Chanda, consider themselves Raj Gonds, and this brings us to the still somewhat problematic division between Raj Gonds and Dhur or Dhurwe Gonds, which runs through the greater part of the Gond population within the Central Provinces. There seems to be no uniformity in the principles ruling this division; in Chhattisgarh only the members of ruling or formerly ruling families are described as Raj Gond, while in other parts most of the land-holding Gonds aspire to this denomination. In recent times the name Raj Gond has also been
[64] claimed by certain Gonds who have tried to raise their social status by

1. The Hill Murias extend into the hills of the neighbouring Chanda District.

4: Fürer-Haimendorf E-5 (1942-1945) 1948
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compliance with Hindu customs, and "Raj-Gond" reform movements have made their appearance in the Central Provinces.

Various theories have been advanced to explain the distinction between Raj Gonds and the other sections of the Gond peoples. C. B. Lucie-Smith writing of the Raj Gonds of Chanda suggested that either "the epithet Raj was originally applied to royal and noble Gond families, from which the distinction spread to their followers and the governing class generally; or it may describe the leading Gond tribe which in ancient days conquered the land from other aboriginal clans."[1] But Captain Forsyth believed that Raj Gonds are in many cases the descendants of alliances between Rajput adventurers and Gonds, and R. V. Russell quotes this view with qualified approval.[2]

W. V. Grigson on the other hand lays emphasis rather on the social than the historical causes for the distinction and suggests that such names as Raj Gond arose from "the tendency, familiar throughout India, of local groups of primitive races which are gradually being Hindu-ized to regard themselves and to be accepted by their Hindu neighbours as separate Hindu castes under new names."[3] The situation in Adilabad seems rather to accord with the second suggestion advanced by Lucie-Smith; for here the Raj Gonds do not form a ruling class or even a class of privileged economic status, but an entire tribal group comprising all strata of society from the feudal chiefs down to the poorest labourer. We will see in a later chapter that the once powerful Gond Kings of Chanda belonged to this group, and their kinsmen in the Adilabad hills were as early as the 17th century referred to as Raj Gonds in patents of the Emperor Aurangzeb.

Here the Raj Gonds, far from aspiring to inclusion in the Hindu fold, consider themselves the true exponents of Gond culture and Gond language, and above all of the traditional Gond religion which involves the sacrifice of cows at the rites for the clan-gods. Many of them have never met a Dhurwe Gond, but those who have come in contact with the few groups of Dhurwe Gonds who have recently drifted across the Chanda border, look down upon them as speaking a corrupt form of Gondi intermixed with much Marathi, and as following different customs; somewhat sweepingly and apparently unjustly they assert that the Dhurwe Gonds have no cult of clan deities "only worshipping Bhimana like Kolams."[4]

It seems indeed that the Raj Gonds of Adilabad, who have lived for almost a century and a half under Muslim rule, and have in consequence been less exposed to the influence of the more intolerant exponents of Hinduism, have retained more of their old culture than

1. *Report of the Land Revenue Settlement of the Chanda District, Central Provinces.* 1869. Nagpur 1870, p. 46.
2. *The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India.* London 1916. Vol. III. p. 63.
3. W. V. Grigson, *The Maria Gonds of Bastar.* London, 1938 p. 36.